



UN ATT Conference, Geneva August 21-26, 2016

Mr. President, I am Sheldon Clare, president of Canada's National Firearms Association. The NFA is the largest advocacy organization representing the rights of firearms owners and users in Canada. I would like to make four brief points regarding the ATT and civil ownership of firearms.

First, Mr. President, The ATT should have excluded civilian firearms, and the research from Canada has proven that efforts to control civilians and their firearms is expensive, bureaucratic, and has nothing to do with reducing criminal misuse of firearms. Dr. Caillin Langmann's analysis of government data has demonstrated that none of Canada's firearms control efforts from the 1970s forward have had any effect upon reducing violent crime or suicide rates.¹ It is surely clear from recent and ongoing events around the world that there is a pressing need for civilians to have improved, not reduced, access to arms for defence.

Second, Mr. President, the activities of hunting, target shooting, collecting, self-defence, and the manufacture and sale of firearms, ammunition, and accessories support economies around the world. Canada and the United States are important examples of this major benefit, with hunting and civil firearms related activities generating billions of dollars of economic gain.²

Third, Canadians, including aboriginal people, use firearms and ammunition responsibly in support of hunting, target shooting, history, and defence.³ Ammunition from military surplus sources is an inexpensive way for former military stocks to be consumed in a safe and responsible manner by civilian enthusiasts far from conflict zones. Efforts to add additional marking to ammunition will merely impede responsible use, and do nothing to stem illegal activities. UN efforts need to remain focused on State actors, terror groups, and areas of conflict, not over regulating civilian firearm communities within stable States. When the UN Secretary General said in his statement to the Security Council last year that, "Guns can be licensed, marked and confiscated...", he confirmed the fears of many people about the UN's agenda towards civilian firearm ownership. Such statements are alarming to members of Canada's recreational firearms community.

Finally Mr. President, firearm owner and user groups have serious concerns about frequent misdirected attempts to attach civilian firearms ownership to problems of international mass violence. There is also a tremendous difference between the violent activities of state actors and terrorists, and the peaceful nature of people who use firearms and ammunition as tools in their everyday lives. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ Langmann, Dr. Caillin. "Canadian Firearms Legislation And Effects On Homicide 1974 To 2008", in Journal of Interpersonal Violence, August 2012; vol. 27, 12: pp. 2303-2321., first published on February 10, 2012.

² The economic effect in Canada has been documented in Canada. Tourism Commission. *Sport Fishing and Game Hunting in Canada - An Assessment on the Potential International Tourism Opportunity*. CTC Research and Evaluation, October 2012, pages 3-29.

³ See Mauser, Prof. Gary. *Hubris in the North*, Fraser Institute digital Publication, June 2007., for an analysis of the Canadian situation regarding registration.